

when it conducted atmospheric tests of nuclear weapons in the Pacific and the people of the Marshall Islands are still suffering from the aftermath of those tests. We have a moral obligation to provide this food assistance, and much more, for the damage we did to their country with our atmospheric tests. As this is the same provision which passed the Senate as section 1 of S. 210, I am glad to see we are considering at least this small portion of that legislation, so these Pacific islanders can continue to receive this necessary assistance.

Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore [Mr. GUTKNECHT]. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Alaska [Mr. YOUNG] that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 1460, as amended.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds having voted in favor thereof) the rules were suspended and bill, as amended, was passed.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. YOUNG of Alaska. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on H.R. 1460, the bill just passed.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Alaska?

There was no objection.

APPOINTMENT OF CONFEREES ON H.R. 2107, DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR AND RELATED AGENCIES APPROPRIATIONS ACT, 1998

Mr. REGULA. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent to take from the Speaker's table the bill (H.R. 2107) making appropriations for the Department of the Interior and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 1998, and for other purposes, with Senate amendments thereto, disagree to the Senate amendments, and agree to the conference asked by the Senate.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Ohio?

There was no objection.

MOTION TO INSTRUCT OFFERED BY MR. YATES

Mr. YATES. Mr. Speaker, I offer a motion to instruct conferees.

The Clerk read as follows:

Mr. Yates moves that the managers on the part of the House be instructed to agree to the amendments of the Senate numbered 120, 121, and 122.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the rule, the gentleman from Ohio [Mr. REGULA] will be recognized for 30 minutes and the gentleman from Illinois [Mr. YATES] will be recognized for 30 minutes.

The Chair recognized the gentleman from Illinois [Mr. YATES].

Mr. YATES. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, this is a motion to instruct the conferees on the Interior appropriations bill, to accept the provisions of the Senate bill improving funding for the National Endowment of the Arts.

The House, my colleagues will recall, provided no funds for the National Endowment of the Arts because it was said it was unauthorized. And yet, Mr. Speaker, 14 other agencies in the House bill which were unauthorized received waivers from the Committee on Rules in order to permit them to receive money for their operations.

NEA was the only unauthorized agency that did not receive a waiver of the Committee on Rules. And therefore, it was subject to being stricken by the bill on a point of order. That is why we attacked the rule, Mr. Speaker. We sought to vote down the previous question to correct the discriminatory treatment accorded to the NEA.

Mr. Speaker, we lost by one vote. One vote, Mr. Speaker. And NEA was stricken from the bill on a point of order when the bill came to the floor. That strong showing, Mr. Speaker, indicates to me that there is strong support for the NEA in the House, and that is why I believe the House is ready and willing to join the Senate in providing the fund for NEA, and that is why, Mr. Speaker, I have filed this motion to agree with the Senate.

I urge support for my motion.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. REGULA. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days to revise and extend their remarks and that I may include tabular and extraneous material.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Ohio?

There was no objection.

Mr. REGULA. Mr. Speaker, I have not had any requests for time at this point on this motion to instruct. I reserve the balance of my time if the gentleman from Illinois [Mr. YATES] would go forward.

Mr. YATES. Mr. Speaker, I yield 4 minutes to the gentleman from New Jersey [Mrs. ROUKEMA].

Mrs. ROUKEMA. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from Illinois [Mr. YATES] for yielding me the time.

I rise in strong support of the motion of the gentleman from Illinois [Mr. YATES]. I supported it in the House when we first brought this issue up. But of course, it was eliminated, as the gentleman stated, really on a parliamentary maneuver, not only the lack of a waiver but the parliamentary maneuver to defeat the rule.

I am afraid that a lot of people were opposing it because they thought it was reducing the budget deficit, and I do not believe that had validity. But more importantly, there was a parliamentary maneuver that denied us the vote, not only denied us the vote,

but really gave some people the opportunity to dodge the issue instead of confronting it directly. I am afraid that it put the House on record as being part of a dumbing down of America. I hate to say that, but I regretfully must admit that is the way the people across the country interpreted that vote. And in my opinion, it will be part of a "dumbing down" and denying Americans and the children especially the benefits of cultural and educational programming.

Fortunately, the Senate had the wisdom to include the funding. And indeed, I want to remind my colleagues, as they are aware from their own situations in their own communities, this is not just something that is good for urban communities; it supplements in urban, suburban, and rural areas alike improve the educational and the cultural qualities, whether we are talking about community orchestras or dance companies or the numbers of other children's programs that are supported by the NEA.

I want to tell my colleagues also, from my own experience as a member of the authorizing committee and for those that are fearful that there are some violations of community ethical and cultural standards and some that are still operating under the assumption that there is somehow a pornographic or indecent material here, I want to speak now as one of those who worked with our late departed colleague Paul Henry in 1990 to put the reforms in place.

This statement and debate was not permitted because we were denied, under the previous rule, the opportunity to debate this issue under the rules. The law as it now exists as to how the community standards must be met and it is precise as to how those selections are made. There is no longer any reason to look askance at the NEA as violating community standards of decency or projects that have questionable background.

So I guess in summary I want to say, for those who are concerned that we are violating community standards under this proposal, that is a thing of the past. Our committee put in good operational standards as long ago as 1990. This is no longer valid as an argument against the NEA. But to those who were taken in by the parliamentary maneuver so that some dodged the issue as to whether they stood squarely for continuing support for the National Endowment for the Arts, I want to say, this is a straight up-or-down vote. We are agreeing or disagreeing directly with the funding and authorization for the National Endowment for the Arts and following the wisdom of the Senate.

I know that all those letters and telephone calls that my colleagues had those editorials, commentary that was highly critical of us in the House, we now have a way, a direct up-or-down vote, to correct that problem that we created for ourselves under the parliamentary procedure and to correct it